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## PROCEEDINGS OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES.

**Nova Scotian Institute of Science.**—March 9th.—The following paper was read: "Some Illustrations of Dynamical Geology in Southwestern Nova Scotia," by L. W. Bailey, Esq., M. A., Ph. D.

HARRY PIERS, *Secretary*.

**Boston Society of Natural History.**—February 19th.—The following papers were read: Mr. Outram Bangs: "The Terrapin an Inhabitant of Massachusetts." Dr. Joseph Lincoln Goodale: "The Vocal Sounds of Animals and the Mechanism of their Production."

March 4th.—The following paper was read: Prof. F. W. Putnam: "Symbolism in Ancient America."—SAMUEL HENSHAW, *Secretary*.

**New York Academy of Sciences—Biological Section.**—February 7th, 1896.—Dr. J. G. Curtis in the Chair.

A communication from the Council was received asking that the Section take action on Rep. Hurley's bill "To fix the standard of Weights and Measures by the adoption of the metric system of weights and measures."

On motion of Dr. Dean, the Section approved the bill and the Secretary was directed to express the entire commendation of it to the Council.

Dr. Arnold Graf read a paper on "The Structure of the Nephridia in Clepsine." He finds, in the cells of the intra-cellular duct, fine cytoplasmic anastomosing threads which form a contractile mechanism. These are stimulated by granules which are most numerous near the lumen of the cell, and thus a peristalsis is set up which moves the urine out of the duct. In the upper part of the intra-cellular duct, the two or three cells next to the vesicle or funnel have no distinct lumen, but are vacuolated; the vacuoles of the first cell being small, those of the second larger, and so on, till the vacuoles become permanent as a lumen. He explains the action of the first cell as being similar to the ingestion of particles by the infusorians. The matter taken up thus from the funnel by the first cell is carried by the rest, and so on till the cells having a lumen are reached. The presence of the excretum causes the granules to stimulate the muscular fibres of the cells; peristalsis results and the substance is carried outwards. The character of this contractile reticulum offers an explanation of the structure of a cilium as being the continuation of a contractile reticular thread.

N. R. Harrington, in "Observations on the Lime Gland of the Earthworm," described the minute structure of these glands in *L. terrestris*, and showed that the lime is taken up from the blood by wandering connective tissue cells which form club-shaped projections on the lamellae of the gland, and which pass off when filled with lime. The new cell comes up from the base of the older cell and repeats the process. This explanation is in harmony with the fact that in all other invertebrates lime is laid down by connective tissue cells. Histological structure and the developmental history confirm it.

Dr. Bashford Dean offered some observations on "Instinct in some of the Lower Vertebrates." The young of *Amia calva*, the dogfish of the Western States, attach themselves, when newly hatched, to the water plants at the bottom of the nest which the male *Amia* has built. They remain thus attached until the yolk sac is absorbed. As soon as they are fitted to get food they flock together in a dense cluster, following the male. When hatched in an aquarium they go through the same processes. The young fry take food particles only when the particles are in motion, never when they are still. The larvæ of *Necturus* also take food particles that are in motion.—C. L. BRISTOL, *Secretary*.

**American Philosophical Society.**—January 17th.—Prof. Hilprecht presented a paper on "Old Babylonian Inscriptions, Chiefly from Nippur," Pt. ii.

February 21st.—Prof. A. W. Goodspeed read a paper on the Röntgen method, with demonstration. Remarks were made by Prof. Houston, J. F. Sachse, Prof. Robb of Trinity College, and Prof. Trowbridge of Cambridge.

March 6th.—The following paper was presented: "Eucalypti in Algeria and Tunisia from an Hygienic and Climatological Point of View," by Dr. Edward Pepper.

**Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia—Anthropological Section.**—February 14th.—The following papers were read: Dr. Allen on "Prenasal Fossæ of the Skull;" Dr. Brinton on "Human Hybridism;" Dr. McClellan, Skulls and Photographs exhibited.

CHAS. MORRIS, *Recorder*.

**The Academy of Science of St. Louis.**—February 17, 1896.—Dr. Adolf Alt spoke of the anatomy of the eye, and, by aid of the projecting microscope exhibited a series of axial sections representing the general structure of the eye in thirty-one species of animals, comprising two crustaceans, the squid, three fish, two batrachians, two reptiles, ten birds, and eleven mammals.

Professor F. E. Nipher gave an account of the Geissler and Crookes tubes and the radiant phenomena exhibited by each when used in connection with a high-tension electrical current of rapid alternation, and detailed the recent discoveries of Professor Röntgen, showing that certain of the rays so generated are capable of affecting the sensitized photographic plate through objects opaque to luminous rays. Attention was also called to the experiments of Herz and Lodge with discharges of very high tension alternating currents, which showed that by the latter certain invisible rays are produced, which, like the Röntgen rays, are capable of passing through opaque bodies, such as pitch, but differing in their refrangibility by such media.

March 2d.—Mr. F. W. Duenckel presented a comparison of the records of the United States Meteorological Observatory, located on the Government building in the city, with the record for the Forest Park station, showing that the daily minimum averaged decidedly lower at the Forest Park station than in the city, while the wind averaged decidedly higher for the city station.

Professor E. E. Engler spoke on the summation of certain series of numbers.—WILLIAM TRELEASE, *Recording Secretary*.

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## SCIENTIFIC NEWS.

The *Journal of Comparative Neurology*, which is now entering upon its sixth volume, has its editorial facilities considerably enlarged by the addition to the staff of Dr. Oliver S. Strong, of Columbia College. Professor C. L. Herrick continues as Editor in-Chief. The Managing Editor for 1896, is C. Judson Herrick, to whom business communications should be addressed at Denison University, Granville, O. Editorial communications may be sent to either of the three editors.